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Venerable Servant of God,
JOHN NEPOMUCENE NEUMANN, C. SS. R.

Short Life of the Venerable Servant of God

John Nepomucene Neumann, C. SS. R.,

Bishop of Philadelphia.

BY

Very Rev. J. Magnier, C. SS. R.



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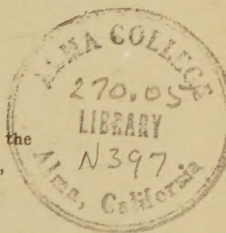
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Introduction.



HIS "Short Life of the Venerable John Nepomucene Neumann" has been taken from the *Positio super Introductione Causae*, which contains the sworn testimony of witnesses examined in Philadelphia, Budweis and Rome, and Letters from the Bishops of the United States and Bohemia, from documents in the Archives of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer in Rome, and from the larger Life written by Rev. Fr. Berger, C. SS. R. We have striven to select facts which give a true picture of one who is a model for children, students, priests and missionaries. In his life as Bishop we have given that prominence which his action in favor of Catholic education merits, and which we hope may earn for him one day the title of PATRON OF SCHOOLS.

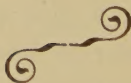
Our story is told in the most simple style. It has been written, we may say, under the shadow of the Miraculous Picture of our Lady of Perpetual Help, and we can do nothing, we are sure, more pleasing to the Venerable Servant of God, than to place this little book at our Mother's feet and ask her blessing on all who shall read it and on ourselves.

J. M.

S. Alfonso, Roma.

June 20th, 1897,

Feast of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.



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Short Life of the Venerable Servant of God

John Nepomucene Neumann C. SS. R.

BISHOP OF PHILADELPHIA.

CHAPTER I.

Early Life and Studies of the Venerable Servant of God.

His Parents, Brother and Sisters. — John Philip Neumann was born in Bavaria. A weaver by trade, when a young man he left his native country and settled at Prachatitz in Bohemia. God blessed his honest toil by success in trade, and rewarded his many virtues by giving him as wife Agnes Lebisch, a young woman full of piety and good sense. He considered it a duty to honor in a special manner the holy patrons whom God gives to each country. Now amongst the heavenly protectors of Bohemia a foremost place must be assigned to the martyr of the seal of confession, St. John Nepomucene. An equally prominent place be-

longs to the holy King, St. Wenceslaus of whom St. Alphonsus speaks so touchingly in his *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament*. God blessed this happy union with two boys, and Philip faithful to his principle called them John Nepomucene and Wenceslaus. To the two boys were added four girls, Johanna, Catherine, Veronica and Aloysia. Wenceslaus and two of his sisters lived long enough to be able to give their sworn testimony to the sanctity of their brother JOHN. This they did in the Process for the Introduction of the cause of him whom we can now style THE VENERABLE JOHN NEPOMUCENE NEUMANN.

Baptism. — John was born at Prachatitz on Good Friday, March 28th, 1811. He was baptized the same day in the church of St. James the Greater. He, together with his brother and sisters grew up under the watchful eyes of their good parents, whose lives were constant lessons to them. Agnes dressed her children in a most simple and inexpensive fashion, and would correct any risings of vanity by saying: “My child, if you be worth anything, you have no need of rich clothes.” But while she detached

them from a love of that which was merely exterior, she left nothing undone to cultivate virtues in their souls. Accustomed herself to hear mass every day, and to make the Way of the Cross, she would give a little reward in pocket-money to the child who accompanied her. As John was frequently her companion, his little purse would soon have been filled had he kept all that he had received. But this was far from his thoughts. He was indeed glad to receive the coin; but only because he was thereby able to help the poor.

There are many instances of the care with which Philip watched over his children. Johanna tells us of the severe correction which he once gave to John, for having told a little lie. She adds that the boy never forgot this correction, and that it was the only fault that he committed in his childhood.

That sweet Providence which watched over him in later years manifested itself when he was only three years of age. One day he fell from a height of fifteen feet into a cellar. When he was taken up, it was

found that he was not in the very least injured by the fall.

John commences his Studies. — At the age of seven he began his elementary lessons. He soon learned to read, and from that time all his delight was in books. Nothing could have given his father greater pleasure. He too was fond of books, and when his day's work was over loved to spend much of the evening in reading. One might say that little John devoured his books. His sister Catherine chided him saying: "John, you are only turning over the leaves." "I beg your pardon," he replied, "I read quickly; but I take it all in." His mother, who thought his application excessive, used to playfully call him *Büchernarren*, *Book-mad*. Wenceslaus who shared with him the same room, but not the same taste for learning, was disturbed at night by what seemed to him his brother's undue ardor for study. On one occasion, not able to bear the annoyance any longer, he went straight to his mother, and complained that John would not let him sleep. The mother went to the room; but scarcely had she entered when she was accosted by the little philoso-

pher: "Mamma, look here. Is it possible that the earth on which we live floats in the air without falling?" "Let the earth go its way," said mamma, "you need not stop it. It is God who sustains it. Go to sleep, then, and let your brother do the same." The merest sign from his mother was enough for him, and both brothers were soon sound asleep.

His Progress in Virtue. — John was pre-eminently a pious boy, and we shall not be surprised when we are told that his progress in virtue was even greater than his progress in secular knowledge. His charity alone would go far to prove this. We have seen how he was wont to distribute his pocket-money to the poor. He would not keep any little presents, which he might chance to receive. He gave them away either to his companions or to the poor. "If Neumann receives anything" said one of his school-fellows, "we all have a share." One day he saw a poor lad begging from door to door, and putting into a bag the pieces of bread that were given to him. "Oh!" he exclaimed, "if only I had a little bag like that boy, I too would go with him, and

then he would get twice as much." Such, indeed, was his progress in Virtue and in the knowledge of the Christian doctrine, that, contrary to the custom of the diocese, he was admitted to Confirmation at the age of nine, that is to say, three years before the usual time. The following year he was allowed to make his First Communion, and for this he prepared himself with extraordinary care and fervor. Henceforth he burned with a most ardent desire to receive Holy Communion frequently, and he ever approached the Divine Banquet with the most tender devotion. Long after this time, he candidly confessed that he prepared himself with great care, and that the Holy Communion was for him the source of every grace.

From his infancy, one might almost say, he had a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and this grew as he advanced in years ever keeping pace with his love for her Divine Son. She in turn jealously guarded his soul from sin. Indeed this devotion together with his love for study and the beautiful family spirit which reigned in his home kept him far from the dangerous

pleasures of the world. His virtue at this early age was so remarkable that it attracted the attention of the neighbors, who used to point out John as a model to their own children. Many a one said of him, as it was once said of the Baptist: "What will this child one day be?"

He wishes to be a Priest. — John's father charmed with his son's intelligence, industry and progress, spoke of a secular profession for him. No, no, said a good servant of the family, our little John will be a priest. We know now how correct was her judgment: but then his vocation was only in germ. One day the children, with their mother looking on, were playing a game of *What shall I be?* There was undoubtedly much chattering and not a little laughing; but John was silent and pensive. He took the matter very seriously. At last his mother said: "Come John, tell us what you wish to be." "Mamma," he replied, "I would wish for something, were it not for the great expense." He wished to be a priest, but, sharp-witted boy that he was, he foresaw all the difficulties that stood in his way.

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His Higher Studies. — After his first Communion he began the study of Latin, and of his own choice he added Botany for which he had a great taste. This study was for his innocent and enlightened soul a meditation; for he saw God in His works. What a contrast to so many grown up men of our days, who in their studies of nature seem to see everything except the hand that fashioned and nourishes all that lives. When he was twelve he went into lodgings at Budweis, and attended the classes of the excellent college of that town. Here he distinguished himself not in one or other branch, but in all, in Christian Doctrine, in Literature, Mathematics, Physics, Natural History, and Modern Languages. His free time and his vacation he devoted to pious pilgrimages, to modern languages, and to his favorite study of Botany. A fellow-student, who visited him one day, found his table covered with sheets of paper. "What in the world," he asked, "have you written on all these sheets." "These," he replied, "are the Italian Irregular Verbs, and they are hard to learn."

He becomes certain of his Vocation.— It was while thus occupied he became quite certain of his vocation. Hence in 1831 he began his course of Theology. His eminent success opened to him the doors of the great seminary of Prague in 1833. There we find the same earnest striving to become more virtuous, the same indefatigable industry, the same success. It was his success that earned for him the privilege of frequenting the University. This is perhaps, the most fitting place to give the impression which John Nepomucene made on one who had studied with him for eight years. When he gave his testimony he was a Cistercian Monk. Here are his words: “John Nepomucene Neumann was full of faith, most cautious in his words; he studiously avoided every sin and every danger of sin; he never neglected to receive the sacraments regularly; he was humble and modest yet full of courage; he was temperate, meek and obedient; he won the good will and esteem of his fellow-students; he studied Theology and Languages with the greatest success; he was loved by his superiors and was a model for us all.”

Notwithstanding his success he expressed to a student his regret at having left Budweis. The following incident explains why. He had earned the privilege of attending the lectures of the University. At that time the teaching was tainted with error. The innocence of John's life, the fulness of his faith, his obedience to the voice of his conscience made him, so to speak, spiritually sensitive. He, therefore, promptly detected and rejected error. One of the professors held Febronian principles. The subtle poison contained in them was soon detected by John and he at once sounded the alarm. Not content with refusing to accept a teaching which he believed to be false, he composed an admirable thesis in defence of the Infallibility of the Pope. His courage and his knowledge won for him the admiration of all. It was, therefore, because the teaching at the College of Budweis was untainted with error that he regretted having left it. But at the time the prospect of having at Prague an opportunity of learning English and perfecting himself in other languages was a great inducement to him to make the change. It is true he did not find the

wished for opportunity, but nothing daunted he continued his studies in private. In this way by the end of his course he had sufficiently mastered all the difficulties in no less than eight languages. He knew Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Bohemian, French, Italian and English, and of course, German, which was the language spoken in his home. He made no show of his success, but he saw in it the hand of God, Who was preparing him for a special work, a work in which he was to save souls of every tongue and nation.



CHAPTER II.

The Venerable John Nepomucene is called by God to work in America.

There was at that time in the Seminary of Prague a holy and learned professor, who was much interested in the missions of North America. He spoke to the students of the abandoned state in which souls in those countries found themselves, and he circulated amongst them a Publication on the Apostolate in the New World. This was published by the Society of St. Leopold. All the materials for the making of an Apostle were ready in the breast of John Neumann, and the words of the professor and the articles of the aforesaid periodical gave them form. The materials for a conflagration of charity were laid, and Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament enkindled them. John made a firm resolution to leave home and devote himself to the sacred ministry in America. A fellow-student tells us that one day while walking with

him on the banks of the Moldau, Neumann declared to him that he had quite made up his mind to leave his own country and to devote his life to the evangelization of North America.

He leaves Home. — John was then in his 25th year, he had completed with distinction his course of studies; and his life was above all reproach. He looked forward to his ordination and first mass with humility indeed, but also with confidence. His mother had ever cherished his vocation as the greatest gift of God to her son and to herself and family. John on his part thought more of the sweet consolation his ordination and first mass would bring to his mother than of the joy it would be to himself. Both were robust souls in the spiritual life and God would strengthen them still more not by the sweets of consolation, but by the invigorating food of sacrifice. The diocese was over-stocked with priests, and the Bishop was unwilling to ordain others till vacancies occurred. This was a great disappointment; but it was God's way of making it more easy for John to declare his resolution to leave his native

land and devote himself to the Missions of North America. It is easy to imagine how keenly his father, mother, brother and sisters felt this announcement. But they generously gave their consent, and thus shared fully in the sacrifice which the young missionary made to God of all that was most dear to him. "My dear Father and Mother," he said, "I have come into this world not to seek honor and glory, but to seek sheep that have gone astray." He needed a strong vocation and God gave it to him. We shall see how difficulties and trials only strengthened it. He desired however to bear all himself, and to give as little pain as possible to his parents. Thus his preparations for departure were made little by little and very quietly. The boy who had been book mad, now a full grown man loved above all his spiritual books, and these as his greatest treasures he distributed amongst the members of his own family. To Johanna he gave *The True Spouse of Christ*, by St. Alphonsus, knowing, as he did, her desire to consecrate herself to God in religion. Had the future been thrown open to his view, he would have seen this

same sister, a venerable nun of nearly four score giving sworn testimony of how much it cost this dear brother to tear himself from the bosom of their happy family, and how he strengthened himself by prayer and the reception of the Sacraments. It was she who found him one day prostrate before a picture of our Lady of Good Counsel bathed in tears. She was witness of the emotion which made his whole frame tremble; but she was also witness of the generosity with which he overcame his feelings lest he should aggravate the sorrow of those whom he loved.

When the day for departure came, he slipped away very quietly from Prachatitz, as if he were about to make a short visit to some friend at Budweis. It was from there he wrote his farewell letter to his parents. It is dated February 11th, 1836, and it assures them that his only motive in leaving secretly was to diminish the pain of separation: he was sure that their blessing would ever follow him; for nothing but a divine call could have torn him from their loving embrace: he assures them that his sacrifice will benefit them: "May you, my dear

parents," he concludes, "bear patiently and with resignation this trial sent you by God. The greater our sorrow now, the greater will be our joy hereafter. God would not have demanded this sacrifice, had He not deemed it salutary, and were He not willing to give us the necessary graces to make it. May His holy will be done."

His Journey to Paris.— He left Budweis on the 18th of February and reached Paris on the 11th of March. He stayed some days at Linz, Munich, Strasburg and Nancy. It was a long and painful journey. Disappointments met him almost at every halt, so that he arrived in Paris without having received any assurance that he would be accepted for the American Mission. To exterior difficulties were added great interior depression and desolation. His courage, his resignation, his abandonment of himself into the hands of God were, without his knowing it, preparing him for the great work which was before him. A great work indeed, but hidden from his eyes; for his future during his whole journey remained shrouded in uncertainty. Of this we find ample proof in his Diary. Take for example

the following entry: "I was disappointed more than ever at Strasburg . . . Admission into the dioceses of New York or Vincennes is uncertain." His first disappointment was to learn that there was no room for him in Philadelphia. — No room for its future Bishop! but this is anticipating. "O Jesus," the entry continues, "I am under Thy protection. The greater the struggle, the more glorious the victory. Thy will be done, O Lord, on earth as it is in heaven. Lord, show Thy love for me, that I may in return love Thee more confidingly. Jesus have mercy on Thy poor servant, who for Thy sake left father and mother and all that is dear to him. For Thee, my Jesus, I live, in life and in death I am all thine."

While in Paris he profited by the many opportunities for acquiring grace which this city gives to those who wish to use them. Difficulties, interior trials and humiliations abounded. He was rejected at S. Sulpice. He was received at the College of Foreign Missions, but with considerable suspicion, and the servants treated him very rudely. He accepted lovingly his humiliations, and prayed for all who offended him; but he

desired that those who treated him badly should not thereby commit any sin. "As for me," he wrote, "do I not deserve severer reprimands and greater punishment? Yes, my Jesus, were the whole world to trample me under foot, I should still be obliged to confess that I deserve a thousand times more."

It was in trials, in fasting, which sometimes lasted the whole day, and in prayer that he prepared himself for a general confession by which he hoped to gain peace of soul. He wrote in French and in fullest detail all his faults and then made his confession in the Church of Notre Dame. There was a passing gleam of light, there was a peace which lasted a few moments, there was a feeling of consolation which vanished before he had fully realized it, and then there was desolation more dark and painful than ever. In his anguish he exclaimed: "O Lord, there is nought but gloom and misery in my soul; the staff (his general confession) on which my hope rested is broken. I am as a plank at sea dashed about by wind and wave. Chaos more dreary, more desolate than that which

reigns in my soul could not have existed before the creation." This was God's way of giving this his faithful servant the great grace of casting all his care on Him. In his desolation there remained light enough to see that his sanctification and the work that awaited him must be God's far more than his. Hence he wrote: "O my God, I see that Thou dost will to do this work Thyself. My plans never lead to any good. Be Thou, therefore, my constant guide and protector." Then buoying himself with the hope of embarking soon on the sea of Almighty Power, he adds: "I will joyfully accept, my Jesus, whatever Thou hast marked out for me, even death itself, if conducive to Thy glory and my own salvation." But while so resigned to God's will, he does not hide from our Lord how grievous a thing it would be to him to fail in his project. He says he deserves failure on account of his sins; but he cries for mercy: "O Jesus," he prays, "do not punish me by detaining me in Europe, as I have deserved a thousand times. Poverty and disgrace I am willing to bear, but, O my Jesus, do not punish me by holding me

back from the sublime and life-giving struggle for souls."

It was thus struggling that he daily grew in spiritual strength. Holy Week came, and it was an agreeable surprise to find that God allowed him to taste the sweets of interior consolation. This was unexpected at such a time, and he feared that it would not last. He often suffered desolation even on the greatest Feasts. Easter came and its alleluias found no joyful response in his poor heart.

He leaves for Havre. — After much prayer and fasting he took a resolution for which God seemed to have waited, namely, that he would start at once for Havre, that he would take ship for America, and that he would trust in Divine Providence for the rest. He had already waited more than a month, and he had not received one encouraging word from any Bishop. This brings out the heroicness of his resolution. He made the journey from Paris to Havre partly on foot and partly by Coach. He was supported in a wonderful manner by God, but trials and desolation more than tempered the consolation he felt. He did

not fail to note in his Diary the kindness of a French inn-keeper's wife. At one of the stage-coach stations all descended to partake of a good meal. Our poor traveller followed the others at a civil distance. He was thinking how he might get some food at the least possible cost, when he heard an encouraging voice calling him. It was the inn-keeper's wife, who invited him to enter. He accepted and soon found himself before a well charged table. He did not hide his embarrassment, nor its cause, and he asked for simple fare more in keeping with his means. "Eat, eat," said the good French woman, "and we will not quarrel over the bill." He made a hearty meal, which he sadly needed, and when he offered to pay, the account was settled by the pious request: "Pray for us, pray for us."

He sails for America. — When John Nepomucene Neumann left Prachatitz he had 200 francs in his purse. Now if we consider the length of the journey, and the many delays, which circumstances forced upon him; if we consider that he ventured to buy some books at Paris, as well as a lovely ivory crucifix which cost seven francs, we shall

wonder to hear that on arriving at Havre on the 7th of April he had still more than 100 francs. He had to wait for thirteen days at port; but no news came to cheer him. Moreover he was visited by a very severe attack of home sickness; but grace ever triumphed in his generous soul. "This poor heart of mine," he writes, "yearns for home to-day. What are my loved ones, my parents, my brother and my sisters doing now? Ah! how often do they not think anxiously of me? O my God, lay my parents' sorrow upon me. Give them peace now in their old age. Oh, how I love them! my God have mercy on us all. Grant us to meet again in heaven and there, without fear of parting, to be happy with Thee for all eternity."

The longed for morning of the 20th of April at last arrived. He was up early. He made a most fervent Communion, the last in Europe for many a day. He had been able to engage a second class berth in the Europa at a very reasonable fare. At noon the good ship hoisted her signal for sailing. John was already on board, and although there were some two hundred passengers,

he was as much alone, as if there were only God and himself in the world. The ship weighed anchor and put out to sea, and next morning there was nothing to be seen but the heavens above and the ocean all around. In the notes of our traveller we find him complaining that he could not make meditation. This can only apply to meditation in set form; for his was a really contemplative soul, whose communings with God were almost continual. Everything seemed to lift his mind to Him. He looked upon his being allowed to embark as a sign that God had accepted his oblation, and for this his heart overflowed with gratitude. "Thou hast heard," he prayed, "my request; Thou hast granted my petition: Oh, how I now rejoice! Mayest Thou be forever praised! After so many struggles, I am once more in peace. O Jesus, I will never forget Thee, since Thou hast so graciously remembered me. Bless my enterprise! Stay with me, assist me, grant me success."

The voyage was fully forty days. He experienced the joy which favorable weather brings, the weariness of a dead calm, the grandeur, cold and danger of ice-bergs, and

the fury of an appalling storm. It was during this latter that he made a most perfect act of entire abandonment of himself to the Providence of God. While all the others were forced to seek shelter below, he alone stood on deck contemplating divine power in the elements and thinking of the future as if no danger were near. Suddenly a warning, clear as if a human voice had spoken, made him change his position, and in an instant a sail yard came down with a terrible crash on the very spot where he had been standing. Long years after he would recall this escape to awaken within him an unbounded confidence in the paternal protection of God, to which he there and then abandoned himself for ever.

Arrival in America. — America was sighted on Trinity Sunday, and on that same day the *Europa* cast anchor three miles below Staten Island. How long the vessel remained there is uncertain; but young Neumann by downright importunity won from the Captain the favor of being up ashore on the Island on the Feast of Corpus Christi. It was in the afternoon, and he took the first steam-boat for New York. He had a most

ardent desire to make at least a visit to our Blessed Lord on this feast of His love. It was pouring rain, but to that he seemed quite insensible. In street after street he sought his Beloved but without effect. Not having been able to find a Catholic Church, he took lodgings for the night in a Swiss Inn. Next morning he repaired to the nearest church, and when he had satisfied his devotion he went to the Cathedral. Here he had the good fortune of meeting Rev. Father Raffeiner, and we will leave the reader to imagine his joy when this good priest told him that he had been accepted some weeks since for the diocese of New York. He was then introduced to his Lordship, the Bishop, Monsigneur Dubois. It was no ordinary meeting. The venerable appearance of the octogenarian Prelate reminded Mr. Neumann of St. John, the Evangelist, and the Bishop's experienced eye saw in the young missionary a true servant of Jesus Christ. He received him most cordially and through very joy knew not whether to address him in Latin, English or French. And here we had better give the words of the present illustrious

Archbishop of New York. In his Petition to the Holy See for the Introduction of the Cause he writes: "While still young, Neumann moved by a divine call and strengthened by his confidence in divine aid, although destitute of human resources set out for America, which he reached after a long and dangerous voyage. . . . Already even before he was a priest my predecessor . . . at first sight discovered in this young man the virtues of riper years. He committed to him the catechising of children who were preparing for First Communion, and while thus engaged he was promoted to Holy Orders."



CHAPTER III.

John Nepomucene Neumann a Priest on the American Mission.

His ordination. — There could be no question in New York in those days of making a retreat before Ordination as we understand it now. But was not the whole life of the venerable Servant of God a remote preparation? Were not his trials interior and exterior all for the Priesthood? Were not the heroic virtues which he practised since he had torn himself from the bosom of his family a most perfect immediate preparation? And the work in which he was occupied was it not a help more than an obstacle? But he was not satisfied with all these. His spiritual notes prove to us how he annihilated himself in the presence of God before he presented himself to the Bishop for ordination. He fully realized the exclamation of St. John Chrysostom: “Nihil et omnia, O Sacerdos!” He confessed his nothingness with the greatest

sincerety possible and God raised him to the unspeakable dignity of the Priesthood.

He was ordained by Bishop Dubois in his Cathedral dedicated to St. Patrick. He received the Subdiaconate on June 19th, the Diaconate on the Feast of St. John the Baptist, June 24th, and the Priesthood on the day following. Thus on June 25th, 1836, fruition succeeded long deferred hopes and John Nepomucene Neumann was a Priest of the Most High. If only his father and mother had been there, it would have been for him paradise on earth. But their absence only intensified the ardor with which he prayed for them and for all at home. On the 26th he sang his First Mass in the Church of St. Nicholas. The thirty children whom he had instructed received their First Communion at this Mass, and thus he himself prepared for them the Divine Banquet.

“It was then,” to use the words of Archbishop Corrigan, “that the prudence, modesty, zeal and the universality of the virtues, with which he was adorned, became apparent. By word and example he led the faithful to salutary practices, and by his

kind manner he made way-ward boys docile, drew them away from danger and trained them to piety."

He is appointed to the district of Niagara Falls. — But his Grace tells us that his was a zeal not to be circumscribed within the narrow limits of St. Nicholas, and, therefore, although so young he was entrusted with the cultivation of a most extensive field near the Falls of Niagara. The Catholics were numerous but scattered here and there over the whole district. "Who will tell us," his Grace asks, "of the labors that wearied him, the perspiration that exhausted him, the difficulties that pressed upon him, the souls that he won to God?"

This district is now in the diocese of Buffalo, and the late Right Rev. Dr. Ryan tells us that when the venerable servant of God arrived, "there were no parochial dwellings, nor indeed any suitable place to take that repose, which was so much needed after his frequent, long and fatiguing journeys to the various stations. These were in dire need of spiritual succor and long distances one from another." Taking Williamsville as centre, he visited the follow-

ing stations: North Bush five miles distant, Lancaster and Transit six, Batavia forty, Sheldon twenty, Niagara Falls fifty. These were the principal, but there were other lesser stations. "He took," says his Lordship, "but little rest, his food was scanty and he often partook of it hurriedly in some poor and even squalid cabin. He was ever ready for work. A difficult road, bad weather, the darkness of night, these he would never allow to stand in his way when there was question of helping souls in need."

His journeys were made for the most part on foot, and he carried on his back the things which were absolutely necessary for the celebration of the Divine Mysteries. When a brother priest would beg him to spare himself and use a horse, he would playfully answer that he was a strong Bohemian boy. But the most robust constitution may be overtaxed, and so it was with the servant of God. One day when utterly exhausted and with feet all blistered from his journey, he laid himself down under a tree unable to go any further. Soon he was surrounded by a roving company of

Indians, who were in search of booty. The position of the poor father was not a pleasant one. As soon, however, as these wild men of the woods recognized that he was a "black robe," far from doing him harm, they laid him gently on a buffalo skin and thus carried him to his destination.

The limits of this brief sketch will not allow of the narration of the many dangers to which his life was exposed when overtaken by storms, or missing his way in the dead of night, or walking fasting long distances from one church to another to say Mass on Sundays, or visiting the sick all day without taking a morsel of food. Rather let us look into his mind and heart and see what is passing there; for all the beauty of those dear to God is from within. His prayer for his people, which happily has reached us, gives us a look into his soul. We gladly give the greater part of it to the reader:

"My Jesus, I a poor ignorant young man have become a shepherd in Thy sheepfold. Lord, regard not my sins! Give me, I beseech Thee, an ever increasing love for those whom Thou hast redeemed, that I

may labor for their salvation in wisdom, patience and holiness. Grant that not one of those confided to my care may be lost through my fault. O Jesus, help me to sanctify my children. O holy Mother of my Lord and God, pray for me and my flock. Holy guardian Angels of my dear children, teach me how to act towards them, so that I may instil into their hearts principles of pure faith and the love of God. Lord, teach me how to live for my people that they may all be saved, that they may love Thee and praise Thee in eternity, and that they may love my dear mother Mary."

He lamented the lot of those whom heresy had torn from the bosom of the Church; he had a deep compassion for those sheep who had no shepherd, and he turned to Mary, who triumphed over all heresies, begging her to save them. But while he prayed so sincerely for them, we have good reason to suppose that the Baptists at least were not without hope of converting him to what they called the *true* religion.

One Sunday morning the venerable servant of God was making his journey on foot to one of his stations, and as he intended to

say Mass for his people he carried his bundle as usual. The ground was covered with snow, and a severe frost made it very difficult to walk. As he was picking his steps a sleigh drawn by horses passed him, and then the driver suddenly pulled up. The occupants of the sleigh were the Baptist Minister and his family. They courteously invited the "little priest" and his bundle into the vehicle, saying that they would carry him to the door of their Church, which was on his way. The "little priest" gladly accepted the invitation, and soon there was a chorus of recommendations urging the beauty of the *true* religion. If indeed it was not beautiful, it certainly was comfortable, and a truly realistic contrast was drawn between the sociable life of a Baptist Minister and the hardships and solitude of the "little priest". Although the conclusions which they drew in no way followed from their premises, they were nevertheless very definite: "We have," they said, "the true religion: We have the Holy Ghost." The silence of the "little priest" not only encouraged them to speak very freely, but also gave the impression that they had won

him over to their way of thinking. 'This impression became a conviction when the "little priest" innocently said: "Tell me how I also can receive the *true* religion." Before the Baptist's church was reached arrangements were made for a conference in which the whole subject was to be discussed for the enlightenment of the "little priest". It will be enough to relate here that when the conference was held, it ended in the confusion of those who provoked it. The climax was reached when a minister full of pride declared that he was full of the Holy Ghost. In proof of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost he appealed to the change of life which had been operated in him. "Once," he said, "I was a sinful man. I used to steal my neighbor's horses and cows. I often cheated in many ways. But since my conversion I am a changed man." Fr. Neumann would test his "conversion," and, therefore, with a look of mingled pity and amusement he turned to the assembly and said: "My friends, you have heard one of your preachers confess his past delinquencies. He assures us that at one time he cheated and stole and the rest. Now can

any of you inform me whether he ever made *restitution* for his ill-gotten goods." "No, no!", shouted a chorus of voices, "he never did." "Then, I put it to you, is his conversion genuine?" "No, no," resounded on every side, "he is the same old rogue that he ever was!" After this the ministers one after another found some pretext for retiring from the scene, and Fr. Neumann soon found himself alone with his friends and the umpire who had been chosen by both parties. He congratulated the "little priest" on his triumph.

These men did not in truth seek to be enlightened. Circumstances forced them to make some excuse for their defeat. They could find no better than that "the little priest was too shrewd, too cunning," and that "he had too much wordly wisdom in him." "Religion," they said, "must be pure." How much nearer to the truth they would have been had they said: Behold a man filled with the Holy Ghost. And how could such men understand the yearnings of Father Neumann's heart for the conversion of non-Catholics? Much less could they realize the sword of sorrow that pierced his

heart through and through, when they tampered with the faith of any member of his flock. Would they not have been moved, had they heard him cry out to God: "My God, my God, sanctify me that I may become a fit instrument of thy graces and mercies to the souls Thou hast confided to me. If thou seest that success will make me vain, do not, I beseech Thee, on that account allow me to fail. Humble me in some other way, but do not punish me through my parishioners. . . . Ah, permit not, my Jesus, that any one of those whom Thou hast entrusted to me should be lost! I will pray, fast, suffer and, with the help of Thy grace, sacrifice life itself. O Lord, endue my words with power and unction that they may glorify the truth."

For four years the venerable servant of God labored unceasingly in this immense district, ever considering himself a debtor to those within and to those outside the true fold. He erected churches in four districts, and near to them schools. At first he taught the children himself; but later on he was aided by his brother Wenceslaus, who left his home in order to share with Father

Neumann his labors and privations. We learn the poor condition of both Pastor and people from letters written to Rev. Father Dichtl. "Only a poor Priest," he writes, "or one who is content to endure the hardships of poverty can labor here with fruit. His duties call him far and near. . . . He leads what may be termed a wandering life. . . . There is no pleasure. . . . except that found in the care of souls. If he seeks comforts, honor or riches, his search will be vain; he will lose both patience and courage and his usefulness will come to an end." Again he wrote: "The Catholic population is continually increasing, not that conversions swell our numbers, but because immigration goes on rapidly. . . . Conversions however are by no means rare." Referring to the condition of the people he said: "Many of our Catholics are in extreme poverty. They live in miserable shanties, some of which have not even the luxury of a window. As a general rule chairs and bedsteads are unknown. I have seen the dying stretched on a bundle of straw or moss. To hear their confessions and prepare them for the Sacraments I have to seat myself by their

side on the ground. When a Priest enters an Irishman's shanty, the whole family young and old make the sign of the cross and salute him with *Welcome Father!* How consoling such a salutation from faithful hearts."

Side by side with the consolations of his sacred ministry we find trials. God kept purifying his soul by desolation. But it was now the desolation of one who was most intimately united to God. He plaintively complains: "Jesus, my delight has fled; alas, I seek for Him in vain! I have lost my Beloved. He harkens not to my sighs, He hears not my voice. My eyes are blinded by my tears; my voice has grown weak from lamenting; but He is not moved: He does not show Himself to my poor soul. Jesus, Jesus where art Thou?" When a ray of light penetrated the darkness in which his soul was enveloped, then his heart would expand under the sensible touch of divine grace.

But to return to his work. He was not satisfied with all that he had been striving to do himself. He wrote to Europe to engage friends to come to America to labor

for souls, and he did all in his power to induce those, who would remain at home, to begin a College for the American Missions. His efforts were vain, and thus left alone he worked in a superhuman manner till at last his health gave way. A severe attack of fever, which lasted three months, made him very weak, and there was question of transferring him to Rochester. To this the holy man would not consent. "It will be easy," he said, "to get a Priest for Rochester; but very difficult to find one for my district. Indeed," he added, "if I fail, it will be necessary to find two," thus innocently giving to himself without intending it, the praise which he so rightly merited.

Few men had less reason to fear avarice than he. Every penny he could spare went to his churches, his schools and to the poor. Not satisfied with this he made a vow of poverty.

But while no human motive could induce him to leave his people, a call from God came to break bonds which bound him so closely to them; the call was to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. Much as Rev. Father Pax, his confessor,

felt his loss, he fully approved of his vocation. Having, therefore, duly received the permission of Right Rev. Dr. Hughes, his Bishop, he left his Mission on the 13th of October 1840, and immediately entered the Redemptorists' Noviciate. His brother Wenceslaus followed his example, and entered, as lay brother, a month later.



CHAPTER IV.

Venerable John Nepomucene Neumann a Redemptorist.

The Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. — The Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer is well known to-day in the United States, and the present generation has no idea of its humble beginnings. Founded by S. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori on the 9th of November 1732 in the midst of a population of poor shepherds and country laborers in the kingdom of Naples, approved by Pope Benedict XIV on the 25th of February 1749, it was soon after the death of the holy Founder transplanted beyond the Alps. Blessed Clement Mary Hofbauer was the standard bearer. His first foundation was at Warsaw in Poland, where the fruits of his labors were truly marvelous. Little by little and for the most under adverse circumstances, the Congregation spread into Austria and Germany. The mind of Blessed Clement was steadily fixed on America, and at one time it seemed cer-

tain that he himself would be the first Redemptorist to cross the Atlantic. The first beginning of the work, however, was reserved to his successor, the servant of God, Joseph Passerat. In his office of Vicar General of the Transalpine Houses he sent three Fathers and as many Brothers to the United States in 1832. They reached New York on the eve of Corpus Christi, and the next most blessed day the Fathers said Mass for the first time in the New World. They had come to labor amongst the German population, which was then even more destitute of spiritual aid than the abandoned souls of the kingdom of Naples for whom S. Alphonsus had first founded the Congregation. They, therefore, did not remain in New York, but moved westward to Cincinnati, whence they penetrated the country northwards as far as Green Bay.

In August two other Fathers arrived from Europe of whom one was Rev. Father Prost. Much good was indeed effected, but the difficulties which they encountered were so many and seemingly insurmountable, that some were inclined to abandon the work. Happily a letter from Father Passerat

came in good time to reassure the wavering, and he prophesied to them that as soon as their Blessed Founder was canonized the Congregation would take root permanently in the United States. And so it came to pass, for in 1839, the year of the canonization, the Fathers settled permanently in Pittsburg, Pa. From that time forward their labors were almost unceasing and the fruits surpassed their most sanguine expectations.

Rev. John N. Neumann a Novice. — Rev. Father Prost in his Apostolic journeying met Rev. Father Neumann at Rochester. He was the instrument chosen by God to make the Congregation known to him, and the Vocation for which He had been preparing him. I say God “had been preparing him”; for in the midst of his many labors he found time to cultivate the very virtues which fitted him for a Redemptorist life; humility, simplicity, a charity full of tenderness, a zeal which difficulties only made more ardent, a burning love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and the confidence of a child in the ever Blessed Mother of God. Prayer was the life of his life, and in it he

sought grace ever to do God's will. He drank deep draughts of the spirit of St. Alphonsus as may be seen in his notes, and in the Rule of Life which he followed. He had made a vow of chastity; he had made a vow of poverty; it only remained that he should make a vow of obedience and this he desired with all the ardor of his heart. He entered the Congregation because he was convinced that he needed the helps which it could give him. God called him to the Congregation, because He had chosen him to be one of the foundation stones of the Institute in America. He was the first priest received in the United States, and few then realized fully the treasures, which God had hidden in his bosom. His entry marked a new period in the work of the Redemptorists, which from that day went on increasing till the Fathers had formed more than two hundred centres of pastoral labor, most of which have now their own priests and are flourishing parishes.

A regular noviciate in those days was not possible, but whatever might have been defective in form, was more than compensated by the fervor with which our novice

made use of the means at his disposal. He made his noviciate partly in Pittsburg, partly in Baltimore, and partly in succoring those who spiritually speaking were dying of hunger. After fourteen months of probation he made his vows in the church of St. James in Baltimore on January the 16th 1842. He announced the event to his parents saying: "I belong now body and soul to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. The corporal and spiritual aid mutually given and received, the edification and good example....which one has all round him till death, wonderfully facilitates the life I am now leading, the vocation to which I have been called. I have every reason to hope that death will be more welcome to me in this holy Congregation than it usually is to seculars." Later on he wrote: "Oh, what a blessing it is to live in the Congregation, especially in America! Here we can really love God. We can labor much for Him and so quietly and unnoticed by the world."

After his Profession. — His work for two years after his Profession differed but little from that to which he had grown accus-

tomed at Niagara Falls. With Baltimore as a centre, the Fathers visited Cumberland, Harper's Ferry, Martinsburg, Strasburg, Kingwood, Frederic, Richmond, York, Columbia, Westminster, and even more distant places. Much of this work of visiting fell to Father Neumann, and, in general, with a self-forgetfulness which only increased with time, he devoted all the strength that remained to him to the constant discharge of the most trying duties of the sacred ministry.

Father Neumann is made Superior. — At the nomination of Superiors in 1844 he was sent to Pittsburg to take charge of the community and parish. It was as Superior he built the beautiful church of St. Philomena, which stands there to-day a monument to his toil, his sacrifices, his piety. This was solemnly blessed and opened in October 1846. He then turned his attention to the housing of his community, and began the erection of a suitable convent. Before this work was completed his health completely broke down. It was no wonder, for his labors and anxieties were excessive, and he would take no care of himself. On the con-

trary, he claimed the most difficult work as his by right. For example, he went on all the night sick-calls. He would say to the others: "You need all the rest you can get: I cannot sleep at night, so I might as well go myself." It was, therefore, necessary to have recourse to the Provincial Superior in order to save him. He was sent an obedience to put himself under medical care, and he submitted with the simplicity of a child. The doctor found his state alarming, and he declared that, if he were to be saved, he must quit Pittsburg and have a long rest. He was then called to Baltimore, where, with much careful nursing, he regained to some extent his strength. The long rest, however, was rudely interrupted by a letter from Europe appointing him Vice-Provincial in America. This was in February 1847. Three years later the great servant of God, Father Joseph Passerat retired from office and was succeeded by Father Smetana, who procured the erection of the houses of the United States into a Province, and, to the great joy of Father Neumann, Father Bernard was named first Provincial. He, however, remained in Baltimore as

Rector of St. Alphonsus' church and community.

There is not the slightest doubt that Father Neumann was a most perfect Superior. He had learned to rule himself long before he began to rule others. Habitually humble, kind, thoughtful, firm when there was need of firmness, he led his subjects forward more by example than by words. It is equally certain that he discharged all the duties of a vigilant pastor in regard to his people. He instructed them, he warned them against the dangers that surrounded them, and he left nothing undone to draw them nearer and nearer to the sources of grace, which they needed so much, prayer and the frequent use of the Sacraments. Wherever he went, whether in the schools, or in his parochial visits to his people, he seemed to communicate to others that tender love and unbounded confidence in the Blessed Mother of God, which he himself possessed in so high a degree. Over and above all this, he went frequently on missions, and his success was quite extraordinary.

But, in the designs of God, he was now

nearing a time when a trial was to come upon him harder to bear than death itself. It was the evening of St. Joseph's day in 1852. He entered his room. In the dusk it seemed to him that something glistened on his table. He drew near and found that the glitter came from a ring and Episcopal cross. On enquiring he heard that the Archbishop of Baltimore had been to his room. There was no mistaking the import of these insignia of office. He locked his door, cast himself on his knees and prayed the whole night. He wrestled with God; but as far as escaping the burden of the Episcopate was concerned, his wrestling was vain. In the course of the morning Archbishop Kenrick presented to Father Neumann the Bulls of his appointment, together with the formal command of the Holy Father obliging him to accept the See of Philadelphia. He had hoped that the efforts of the Procurator General in Rome might have saved him; but it was not to have been so. Four Cardinals of the Propaganda used their influence to deliver him from the danger that threatened him, but the majority voted for him. When Monsig-

nor Barnabo, the Secretary of the Congregation, made known to Pius IX the efforts made by the Redemptorist Fathers to save Father Neumann, his Holiness replied: "I bear the Redemptorist Fathers in my heart. They have in this matter acted as God would have them to act. I am confident that He will not refuse me light to discern what the good of the Church in general and of the Congregation in particular demands of me. Therefore I sanction the choice of the Cardinals, and I command Father Neumann under formal obedience (*sub obedientia formali*) to accept the diocese of Philadelphia, without further appeal." Rome has spoken, the cause is finished: the will of the Pope was for Father Neumann the will of God, and the humble religious accepted his cross. But with all his resignation there was upon him a fear so great, that he said to one of his confreres on the eve of his Consecration: "If our Lord gave me the choice either to die or accept this dignity, I should prefer to lay down my life to-morrow rather than be consecrated Bishop; for my salvation would be more secure at the judgment seat of God in my

present state, than it will be if I appear
burdened with the responsibility of a
Bishopric."



CHAPTER V.

The Venerable Servant of God as Bishop of Philadelphia.

His Consecration. — The Most Rev. Dr. Kenrick chose the 28th of March for the Consecration of the Bishop-elect and his Grace to be the consecrating Prelate. The reader will remember that the venerable servant of God was born and baptized on Good Friday, March 28, 1811, and now Divine Providence chose the same day of the same month in 1852, for the conferring on him the greatest grace and the highest dignity. It was moreover Passion Sunday, and we can have little doubt that these coincidences together with the feeling of responsibility, which pressed so heavily upon him, led him to take as motto the words: “*Passio Christi, Conforta me!*” “*Passion of Christ, strengthen me!*” and as arms the simple Cross of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

No one regretted more than the Provincial, Father Bernard, the loss of Father

Neumann; but he was determined that nothing should be left undone on the part of the Fathers of the Province and of the Catholic people of Baltimore to show their affectionate veneration for the servant of God. He secured for him all the prayers he could both in the community and parishes. The Bishop-elect hid himself as much as possible in retreat from which he emerged only on the morning of Passion Sunday. Hours before the time announced for the Consecration, the church of St. Alphonsus was densely crowded, that part alone excepted which was reserved for those who were to form the procession. This was fittingly headed by the school children, then followed the various Catholic societies of the city, and last of all came the clergy and his Grace, the Archbishop. The interest taken by the people in this most solemn ceremony was very great, but the climax was reached when the new Bishop made the round of the church blessing every one, while some twenty Redemptorist students chanted the "Te Deum." It may be said with truth that the whole Congregation melted into tears.

Then followed affectionate addresses from the people of Baltimore and from a deputation from Pittsburg. To words were added a gold chalice, ring, pectoral cross and chain and other Episcopal insignia. The offering of the Pittsburg deputation was a Monstrance, than which nothing could have been more appropriate for one who was to introduce the "Quarant' ore" into his diocese. In the evening his Lordship preached, and in his sermon he declared that what he desired most to bequeath to the good people of St. Alphonsus as his parting gift was a child-like devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. His last visit, which was made on Monday, was, as we should have imagined, made to his dear school children. On Tuesday he started for his diocese. Instead of dwelling on the wrench which the parting gave to his heart, or the weight of responsibility which was now actually upon him, we will at this stage of his career pause to consider a marked trait in his life, which up to now has scarcely been touched upon.

Children. — Few priests perhaps had realized more fully than he the words of our Blessed Lord: "Suffer little ones to come to

me and forbid them not'' (Mar. X 10-14). His first work in America was the instruction of children. Children were the communicants at his first Mass in the old church of St. Nicholas, New York. In the extensive district assigned to him he devoted a most considerable part of his time to the children. In Williamsville, where he resided habitually, he not only taught the Christian Doctrine, but also became the children's school-master. In his visits to the different stations, if he remained for a few weeks, he had all the children around him. Many of his scholars learned to read and write in three weeks, as well as to love God and have recourse to the Blessed Virgin Mary. When divinely called to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer his zeal grew even more ardent. When Superior he reserved to himself the instruction of the children for which no one was more gifted. "He excelled," writes one who knew him in his busy days at Pittsburg, "in catechetical instructions, as he possessed in a high degree the secret of making them pleasing and intelligible to children. The simplicity of his explanations appealed to their

understanding, while the piety of his heart communicated itself to theirs. He was, besides, so affable, so gracious, so condescending towards the little ones of his flock, that he found at once a way into their innocent hearts, he won their complete confidence. When his well known step was heard in the school-room smiles of welcome lit up every face. . . . Crowds of these little people used to gather round him in the streets. They would shake his hand, pull his coat and ask for a blessing. To prepare them for First Communion was for him a work of predilection. His diligence in this duty was unremitting. He left no means untried to awaken fervor and piety in their young hearts, and to impress upon their minds a full understanding of what they were to receive in Holy Communion."

A sister of Notre Dame tells us that she had ample opportunities, while in the schools of St. Alphonsus, Baltimore, to study the virtues and eminent qualities of the venerable servant of God. "He was," she says, "an accomplished Catechist and a great lover of children. His gentleness, meekness and perseverance in communi-

cating religious instruction to the children often astonished me, and the salutary impression which he made upon even the most faulty and troublesome of our little people, was quite remarkable. The young delinquents would freely avow to him their faults....His mere glance seemed to contain in it something of the all-seeing attribute of God, so much did he penetrate their souls. They often said to me: "Sister, Father Neumann looked right into my heart."

After a hard day's work this lover of the little ones of our Lord would stay up the greater part of the night working at his Catechisms and Bible History, and never rested till these most valuable books were in the hands of his children.

We must go back fifty years if we are really to understand how the Holy Ghost guided Father Neumann in this matter. The beautiful Encyclicals of Pius IX were not yet written: no Provincial Synods were held: the experience of the woeful effects of schools without God was still in the future; but all these drawbacks notwithstanding, the servant of God at the very outset of his priestly career had formed perfectly his

judgment, a judgment on which we act to-day, namely, that, if our people are to be saved, we must have Catholic schools.

His Arrival in Philadelphia. — Schools. — That all this is in a fitting place here will be readily admitted, when we learn that at *The Episcopal Reception Meeting* in Philadelphia the following words were spoken and accepted by all present: “Reverend Sirs, I know the humility and modesty of our new Bishop. He is no friend to worldly pomp, or splendor, or public demonstrations, in fact such a reception would annoy him exceedingly. I therefore propose as a fitting demonstration of our cordial welcome to him, *to establish a new school*, and to explain to him on his arrival that in doing so we sought to give expression to our joy at his appointment as Bishop of Philadelphia.” He was therefore received in a most modest manner, and the reason why was given. The priests and people could not have given him a greater joy: “Oh, how I thank you, Gentlemen,” said his Lordship, “it is just what I wished for.”

The Bishop addressed a Pastoral letter soon after his arrival to the Clergy, Religious

and Laity of the diocese. Those who knew him said before hand that he would be sure to speak of the schools. They were right. Although circumstances did not allow him to dwell at any length on the subject, he wrote: "We avail ourselves of the earliest opportunity to express our approbation of the efforts which have lately been made in Congregations to organize parochial schools. We exhort the pastors and all who have at heart the best interests of youth to spare no efforts to ensure success. Whatever difficulties may at first attend, and even obstruct this most desirable undertaking, will be gradually overcome by mutual goodwill and co-operation."

He profited by his first sermon after his installation to declare that "our Catholic youth can be saved only by Catholic schools." In the notes taken by a priest who was present we read: "He (the Bishop) openly declared his firm resolution, with God's help, to begin and carry out that work of vital importance, the establishment of Catholic schools. Persuasively and emphatically he exhorted parents to give to their children Catholic training, to enforce

their attendance at Mass and other services of religion, to educate them at home by word and example; but above all to send them to schools in which they would be taught under the eye of the Church."

In less than a month he had framed a plan by which he hoped to give to every parish its own school. On the 28th of April he called together the Pastors of the various Congregations, and several prominent members of the laity. This was the beginning of what was henceforth to be known as the "Committee for the Education of Youth." His Lordship was the President, and indeed the very heart and soul of the society. In his first address he laid it down as his deep-rooted conviction that *for Catholic children Catholic schools are an absolute necessity in order to educate them in faith, form them into good and useful members of the Church and of society, and to secure their eternal salvation.* In this great work by far the greater part of his flock co-operated in a most praiseworthy manner; but as in all good works the devil did not fail to create difficulties. On these, however, we need not dwell, for his Lordship's

spirit of prayer, his unconquerable patience, and the promptness with which he profited by favorable circumstances overcame all. The author of "Lives of the Deceased Bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States" has written: "The parochial schools of the whole diocese of Philadelphia, and especially of the city itself, increased wonderfully in numbers, in attendance, and in efficiency during his administration, and became the crowning glory of his work. The Boys' schools he confided to the Christian Brothers, those of the Girls to the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Sisters of Charity, the Sisters of Notre Dame and other Orders. There were two parochial schools in Philadelphia when he arrived there in 1852: at the time of his death in 1860 he had increased the number to nearly one hundred." His success called for the following remark from a non-Catholic Paper: "We regret to see that the most esteemed denomination in our city has withdrawn its confidence from the public schools. Serious defects must exist in our school system: authorities should therefore, investigate and improve the condition of said schools." Yes, serious

indeed must have been the defects, since they were Godless. The Bishop himself was able to say a few months before his death: "Almighty God has so wonderfully blessed the work of Catholic Education that nearly every church in my diocese has now its own school." From all this we see with what truth the Bishop of Cleveland could write to his Holiness, Leo XIII, that the servant of God may be considered the founder of Catholic schools in Philadelphia.

But we should underrate his zeal, were we to think that it was confined within the limits of primary schools; it extended to all classes of schools. Nor was he one who sat at his desk and simply drew up rules. No, his face and his voice were familiar in every school in the diocese. It was these visits which created a holy emulation amongst the teachers, knowing as they did, the pure joy which his Lordship tasted in seeing the progress of the children. His elevation to dignity made no change in his sweet and condescending manner; and his extensive knowledge filled all with respect for him.

There were, it must be admitted, in his

diocese some schools which had a particular attraction for him; these were the schools for orphans. Of his visits to these a nun writes: "When Bishop Neumann visited an orphan asylum, he appeared the very counterpart of our Lord, the Friend of Children. He went amongst them like a tender, loving father....The little ones would gather round him, and listen attentively while he told them of God's love for them, or explained the different parts of a flower, or some other wonder of nature suited to their young minds. He knew how to use plain and simple language, such as would chain the attention even of the most frolicsome. He led them, as far as their capacity permitted, from the meditation of created things up to the contemplation of God Himself. Their multiplied questions never annoyed him." The good nun does not forget to add that he never came with empty pockets.

No one who has followed this sketch with attention will wonder that, even as Bishop, he ever strove to reserve to himself that which was hardest for nature in the sacred ministry. If there was an obstinate culprit

in prison, he would undertake his conversion; he was willing that the most difficult cases with reference to the Sacrament of Penance should be sent to him; he visited every Catholic in the hospital, and he reserved to himself the night sick-calls. If in the latter he found a mother to whom the thought of leaving an orphan child rendered death particularly painful, he at once assured her that he would take her place. This will explain how one day he appeared at the orphanage with a child of three years old, for whom he sought admittance. His kindness had so won the little creature's heart, that she ever after called him father. This would indeed be a worthy subject for the picture which it is customary to paint at the Introduction of the cause of a servant of God. We must, however, confess that better still is the design of the Postulator of the Cause who has had Bishop Neumann painted in a school distributing prizes to children.

His care of Ecclesiastical Students. — The author whom we cited above writes: "Bishop Neumann chiefly distinguished his administration by continuing and increasing the

work of his predecessor." Now this is particularly true of his seminary. He found in it forty students; but with an ever increasing population these could never supply the wants of his diocese. He had been able to get some help from Germany; but he needed much more. Hence he never lost an opportunity of impressing on his clergy the necessity of devoting special attention to boys who manifested a vocation to the priesthood. He exhorted them to instruct these boys how to lead a pious life, and, if they were satisfied with their conduct, to present them as candidates. He sent numbers of such boys to a college in Maryland to be educated at his expense. But he wanted something more than this. When, therefore, he had thoroughly matured his plans he opened a Preparatory College, which since then has been feeder of the Seminary of the Diocese. He wrote on this occasion an admirable Pastoral Letter, from which I cull but a few passages. "The time," his Lordship writes, "which a seminarian spends at college gives him sufficient opportunity to ascend from virtue to virtue, until he reaches the perfection

required by the Church for her priests. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, meditation in common, prayers daily recited by all, good example of fellow-students, frequent Holy Communion, and the dwelling under the same roof with our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, impose upon him the happy necessity of not only avoiding every wilful sin, but also aid to prepare his heart for every virtue." Having referred to the temporal help needed, and the confidence which he reposed in his flock to obtain it, he concluded: "Yet, brethren, not gifts alone laid on the altar will secure us good priests, but humble prayer with fasting is necessary. Particularly during the Ember-days should the faithful not omit to pray, to receive Holy Communion, and to practise works of self-denial in order that the Pastor of our souls may send worthy laborers into His vineyard, and that we may enter undefiled into the possession of the inheritance reserved for us in heaven."

The Seminary itself had under this learned and holy Bishop attained a very high reputation, and Pius IX bestowed upon it the privilege of conferring the Doctorate. When

at home he visited this establishment every day, and as the time of ordination drew near he redoubled his solicitude. He used to give lectures on Pastoral Theology, and, on these occasions, he gave to the students most useful hints on the study of Moral Theology, Canon Law, and Church History.

His care for Religious. — A perfect religious himself and loving his vocation most tenderly, he appreciated at its full value the same grace in others. Hence he devoted himself to the sanctification of all religious under his jurisdiction. He impressed upon them the necessity of observing faithfully the Rule; for he held that it was through this observance that the blessing of God was to descend on the religious themselves and on their works. He begged them to make known to him all, even their temporal wants. He helped them as much as he was able, and in their seemingly unsurmountable difficulties he inspired them with something of his own great confidence in God, in the Blessed Virgin and in St. Joseph, which won so much for him from an ever bountiful Providence. It is not possible to enter into details, as to his paternal relations with the

various orders, nor as to his manner of cultivating vocations to religion, even when there was question of his own students; but a word must be said of those with whom his heart remained, the Redemptorist fathers. Each one was to him a brother, and it was a delight to him to render them any service in his power. He observed, as far as circumstances allowed, the holy Rule; he went to the Fathers' house every week for confession, every month for a day's retreat, and every year for the spiritual exercises during ten days. In their midst he would not have any distinction made, indeed, if he were allowed, he would take the last place. A doubt having been raised as to whether he ceased to be a Redemptorist in becoming a Bishop, he never rested till it was cleared up. He himself proposed this doubt to Pius IX, who, to his great consolation, assured him that he was still a Redemptorist.

His Clergy. — If such was the care of the venerable servant of God for the lambs of his flock, what shall we say of his relations with those who shared the pastoral office with him, the clergy of his diocese? In the

depth of his heart he looked upon himself as the last and least, and his veneration for those whom God honored with the dignity and enriched with the unspeakable graces of the priesthood, grew with his years. How to help his priests in the sanctification of their own souls, how to co-operate with them in their works of zeal, how to relieve them in their temporal necessities, these were the constant objects of his thoughts, of his prayers, and of his works. He procured for them every year a retreat, and he sometimes gave the exercises himself. He helped them as much as he could in the sacred ministry, and this not only in the city, but even in the most remote districts. When at home he preached nearly always twice on Sundays. He visited all the larger districts every year, and the smaller ones every two years. These visits were often like short missions. He preached to the people and to the children, and heard confessions. He strove to help them to have missions given to their people, and in these exercises in his own city he took a most active part. A priest was never kept waiting for an answer to a letter. Ordinarily

he sent his reply the same day. He was at the disposal of his priests all day long, and if any came from a distance, rooms were prepared for them, and they could make the Bishop's table their own. He gave them every opportunity of making known their difficulties to him, and he relieved them as far as he was able. Presents which he received often found their way to the most necessitous of his priests. The rules which he made for the government of his diocese show how vigilant a Pastor he was; but he was above all to his priests a true father and friend. He, moreover, by his words and still more by his example turned their minds towards Him, Who is in the highest sense of the word the Friend of both Bishop and Priest, our Lord Jesus Christ. He inspired them with some of that confidence in God, which we cannot but consider as the foundation of the undertakings which in five years enabled him to build fifty new churches in his diocese, and continue the work of the magnificent Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul.



CHAPTER VI.

Visit of the Bishop to Rome and to his Native Land.

Visit to Rome. — Rome! The very name seemed to him a medium of grace. Gladly would he have visited the Eternal City soon after his consecration, had not pressing duties detained him in his diocese. We can, therefore, easily imagine with what delight he received in October 1854, a formal invitation from Pius IX to take part in the deliberations on the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This was for him the manifestation of God's will. He immediately set about making preparations, and these included his magnificent Pastoral Letter on our Blessed Mother. "Never, Christian brethren," he wrote, "never can we admit that she was for one moment the slave of the devil....Purer than heaven's purest angel, brighter than its brightest seraph, Mary, — after God her Creator, Who made her what she is and gave her all — is the most perfect of beings, the master-

piece of Infinite Wisdom, Almighty Power, and Eternal Love....May the day soon dawn upon the world....when with one mind and heart Christendom will acknowledge and proclaim this her most honorable privilege!"

He left America on the 20th of October, and after a rough passage of seventeen days arrived at Havre. He made no stay in France, but proceeded at once to his destination. It is not easy to represent him to the reader as he was then and during his stay in Rome. Probably amongst the Bishops, he was the poorest. He used his Episcopal Insignia only when obliged to do so by reason of his office. Ordinarily he wore a very poor habit, with his cross hanging from a much worn cord. He visited all the holy places on foot, and frequently made the pilgrimage of the seven Basilicas fasting. This meant walking for nearly four hours.

At his first audience with the Holy Father, Pius IX graciously addressed him: "Bishop Neumann of Philadelphia! Is not obedience better than sacrifice?" He might very well have replied that he had both. His Holiness

received him frequently, conversed long with him, and granted him many favors for his diocese. The reunions of the Bishops were full of interest and delight to him. To see Prelates of every degree and from every clime, and to hear them with one voice professing their faith and the faith of their people in the absolute sinlessness of Mary, and then to be present when Pius the Great declared to the whole world, as a dogma of faith, that Mary through prevision of the merits of her Divine Son was conceived IMMACULATE, that no breath of sin ever sullied her most pure soul; these were for him a joy beyond description; to be there was paradise.

We cannot dwell longer on the interesting details of this visit, beyond saying that, while he sought to hide himself from the gaze of men and in silence and prayer to drink deep draughts of grace at the holy places and call down blessings on his flock, honors were paid to him by Prelates and Cardinals, recognizing in him a man after God's own heart.

Visit to his Native Land. — He left Rome probably at the end of December, and began

his journey to the home of his childhood. He did not, however, seek the most direct way, for we find him at Loreto. In this visit he imitated his Father, St. Alphonsus, and like him celebrated Mass in the Holy House, and spent hours in sweet contemplation. Moving northwards he visited as many favored Sanctuaries as was possible. At last he arrived at the Austrian frontier. Dressed very poorly and with nothing to indicate his dignity, an official demanded his passport. As it was written in a language unknown to him (English), he was on the point of dragging him off to an office at a considerable distance. It was high time for the Bishop to assert himself; so he produced his ring and Episcopal cross, and these more than set at rest the mind of the worthy official. This, however, was little in comparison with a loss which he sustained. He placed in a small box all the spiritual treasures which he had collected, relics and other pious objects, but the box was lost or stolen en route. He felt this intensely. He made certain promises to St. Anthony by way of vow, and immediately a young man addressed him as Bishop, although nothing

in his exterior indicated ecclesiastical dignity, and presented the missing box. For a moment he was seized with astonishment; then turning to thank the bearer he found that he had disappeared.

As he neared the scenes of his early life, he laid out his plans as to how he might best see his friends while avoiding all demonstration on the part of the people.

Prague. — Prague was his first halt. Here he met his sister Johanna, now a holy religious. It was like the meeting of St. Scholastica and St. Benedict. Their conversation helped them to enjoy together the sweets of the service of God, and to strengthen their resolution to be more and more all to Him. His friend, Father Dichtl introduced him to the pious Emperor Ferdinand, who received him cordially and invited him to his table. This was more than a mere honor, for at dessert the Emperor caused to be handed to the Bishop a plate on which was a considerable sum, all in American Gold. This was an Imperial offering for the Cathedral of Philadelphia.

Budweis. — At Budweis, the Episcopal city of his native diocese, he was the guest

of its Bishop, Right Rev. Valentine Iersik. This place was full of memories of his student days. He did not, however, stay long, and quite unexpectedly he announced to the Bishop his intention of leaving after dinner. Nothing could induce him to stay longer, and he confessed to his Lordship that he wanted to reach his father's house without notice under the cover of darkness. For the same reason, viz. that he might escape notice, he refused the Bishop's carriage which was put at his disposal. He left in a closed sleigh, and congratulated himself on the success of his plan.

Prachatitz. — It was the 2nd of February, and as now under the protection of the Queen of Heaven he was on the high road to Prachatitz, there would be, he hoped, no demonstrations. Man proposes, but God disposes. A youth named Adalbert Benesch had watched all the movements of the Bishop of Philadelphia, and as soon as he saw the sleigh in readiness he started before it, and gave notice to every family along the road side. The news spread, and the Bishop at intervals found the road lined with people who had come to salute him and ask his

blessing. This was not all. At his approach to the village of Nittolitz the church bells rang out their welcome, and the inhabitants headed by the clergy went out to meet him. They conducted him to the church, where he said a few words to them and gave them his blessing. This, however, did not satisfy them. He had to stay over night, and say Mass for them next morning. And now he had to form a new plan. He would leave on foot in company with a nephew of his, and enter Prachatitz by a road on which no one would have expected to see him. Again it was man proposing, but God disposed, that next morning the magnificent sleigh of Prince Schwarzenberg drawn by four spirited horses should bear him to his home. There was no escaping, he had to consent. We have no time to dwell on his Lordship's discomforture, for the Prince's horses made short work of the distance from one point, while from Prachatitz the clergy, the town officials, and private citizens in their sleighs had set out to meet him. There were a few words of hearty welcome, and then all fell into line of procession. At the village of old Prachatitz the civic-guards were drawn

up in line to salute him with military honors. And here I must let Father Berger speak: "The drums sounded, the musicians united in chorus, and the cheers of the multitude rent the air. After this demonstration the band struck up a lively march, the city bells began to ring, and the procession moved forward. The scene was one of triumph. It was a reception such as might have been extended to a conqueror returning with well earned laurels."

What a change! Eighteen years ago he left this town friendless, companionless and practically penniless, and now in spite of all his efforts to conceal himself he is received as a hero. And hero in very truth he was. To whom save the angels is it given to count his battles and his victories in the cause of God?

Then there was the crowding into the church, the chanting of the *Te Deum*, and his refusing all invitations however honorable. He would stay with his father and he goes straight to the home of his childhood. The venerable old man was standing at the door, and as his son approached,

silence fell on that surging mass of men and women who had followed him. A moment, and son and father were linked in a fond embrace, heart beat against heart, and tears of joy burst from their eyes; yea, and from the eyes that witnessed that most touching meeting. The silence was broken by the voice of one who expressed the thoughts of all the old friends of the family: "Ah! that his mother were here to share this happiness!" "Yea," said the Bishop, "she sees us, she sees us. My good mother is looking down on us: she is rejoicing with us." It was difficult to save his Lordship from his friends. Everybody would speak to him, and kiss his hand. To save him, as the Bishop confessed afterwards, his old father carried him in his arms up-stairs.

He stayed in Prachatitz for six days. These were days of grace for the whole population. The Bishop said Mass for them, preached to them, and received all with a humility and heavenly grace that had become natural to him. He submitted to the public demonstrations of respect and affection, which he could not avoid. They

were bearable to him, for he offered all the honor paid him to his Divine Master. *)

When he had visited the grave of his dear mother, he reconciled his father to his immediate and private departure. Therefore on the 9th of February, long before any of the people were astir, he bade his relatives a last good bye and left the town. After a drive of four hours he reached the favored sanctuary of Goujau where he said Holy Mass. At 8 o'clock the church of Prachattitz was full of people expecting the Bishop's Mass; but they learned to their grief that his Lordship had left them.

I cannot dwell on the details of his journey through Europe; but the reader will turn over in his mind the contrast between this journey and that of 1836. If, however, we look into his heart we shall find that it is more humble, more meek, more charitable, more childlike in its confidence in God, more like, in a word, the Heart of our Blessed Lord.

He left Liverpool on the 10th of March,

*) For a fuller description read *Father Berger's Life* of this great servant of God, Part IV. Cap. IX. Benziger Bros. New York.

and arrived in New York on the 27th. The same day he started for Philadelphia, and on the anniversary of his consecration he was once more in the midst of his loving and devoted people.



CHAPTER VII.

The Daily Life and Virtues of the Venerable Servant of God.

On his return from Rome the Bishop resumed his work. He had sought to be relieved from the burden of his Bishopric, but he sought in vain. He had asked to be transferred from the important see of Philadelphia to some newly formed diocese far out in the country, but this too was refused. If then he must stay, at least let his vast diocese be divided; but no, it was the will of the Holy Father that he should remain as he was; but he would give him a Co-adjutor. It was thus that the Right Rev. Dr. Wood came to share his work and his responsibility.

This help, however, did not mean rest for the venerable Bishop; for he sought none here below. Like his beloved Father, St. Alphonsus, he made a vow never to lose time, and this will in some way explain the extent of his activity. All his days were

full days. He frequently took his short repose at night in a chair, and when he allowed himself the luxury of a bed, he was up before 5 o'clock. At 5 o'clock he made his meditation. This was followed by part of his office, Holy Mass and Thanksgiving. At seven, when at home, he either went to the church to hear confessions, or began in his room his official work. His correspondence was very large, and he had, by letter, to decide most intricate cases, and answer most difficult questions. But as during the day he received all who called, priests, religious and the laity, ordinarily he had to write much at night. When on visitation he indeed did his best to answer letters, but then he gave himself during the day entirely to preaching, catechising, hearing confessions and seeing any who wished to speak to him.

No one will be surprised that a daily life such as this, combined with what we must regard as neglect of his poor body, undermined his strong constitution.

While devoted heart and soul to the interests of his flock, he did not neglect his own sanctification. Indeed so thoroughly

had he mastered his passions, and so penetrated was he with the ever abiding presence of God that his works, performed with the purest intention, were in themselves prayers. But he was not content with that. He was ever faithful to the exercises of piety, which he had imposed upon himself over and above the Divine Office which he recited so fervently, and often on his knees. Amongst these we should mention especially his devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Jesus in the Tabernacle was his Counsellor and his friend. To Him he went for light and strength and consolation. He desired to draw all to Him. Hence he had conceived the desire to introduce into his diocese the devotion of the *Quarant' ore*, or Forty Hours' prayer to Jesus solemnly exposed on the Altar. He hesitated through a fear of irreverence which in those days was not remote. God by a miracle removed his hesitation; for one night when overpowered by sleep as he sat writing at his table, he succumbed. When he awoke he found that the candle had burned down even to the touching of his papers and had set all on fire. Nevertheless

the writing remained visible on the charred paper, and the servant of God heard a voice which assured him that, as the writing was preserved in the flames, so could God preserve His Divine Son present in the Blessed Sacrament from profanation. There and then he expedited letters to his clergy announcing the introduction of the *Quarant' ore*.

He was not satisfied with daily crowning the Blessed Mother of God with his own Rosary (a crown of roses), he did all in his power to induce others to do the same, children, women, men, and even whole families.

His humility, meekness, modesty, self-forgetfulness and kindness at once impressed every one who approached him; but only those who lived with him realized how untiring he was in work, how persevering in the exercise of virtue, and how regardless he was of all else except the interests of our Lord Jesus Christ. He impressed not only Catholics, but also non-Catholics, and seemed to communicate to others the light of faith which shone so brightly in his own soul. Trained by God in the school of

adversity, and obliged early in life to cast all his care on Him, he acquired himself and communicated to others confidence in His Providence. Indeed this is, as we have already remarked, the explanation of the institutions which grew up in his diocese as if by miracle.

If we could measure his burning love for our Blessed Lord, we should then know how he loved his neighbor. Where there was question of saving a soul, he was blind to danger, or rather he saw nothing but the price which that soul cost our Lord. It is, therefore, no wonder that in working for souls, he often forgot to take his food, paid no attention to inclemency of the weather, or to the difficulties to be encountered on the way. It is no wonder that to the eight languages we have already mentioned he added Spanish and Irish, so that knowing as many languages as there were nationalities in his diocese, he was able to benefit each soul in particular. It is, in fine, no wonder that he who called himself a stout Bohemian boy, should have at the early age of forty-nine worn out his robust constitution.

CHAPTER VIII.

Watching.

“Beati servi illi quos cum venerit dominus invenerit vigilantes.” Luc. XII. 37.

“Blessed are those servants, whom when the Lord shall come, He shall find watching.”

Death is a punishment, and as such all fear it. But the death of Jesus Christ, and the graces which it merited have taken away much of this fear. In the case of those who have taken to heart the oft repeated warnings of our Lord to *watch, not to sleep, to be ever ready*, death inspires scarcely any fear; it is a blessed thing, for “blessed is that servant whom the Lord when He cometh findeth watching.” And certainly John Nepomucene Neumann was one of these blessed servants to whom death is the gate to eternal life.

His death. — We have every reason to believe that he never slept the awful sleep of sin, that he *watched* in youth, in manhood and in his riper years. There is but little reason to doubt that he even had a presenti-

ment that his prison would be thrown open suddenly when our Lord would call him home. He said as much to a lay-brother at St. Peter's, while waiting for the Father Rector. "Brother," he said, "which would you prefer, a sudden death, or one preceded by a long illness?" The Brother answered that he thought the latter would be an excellent preparation for a passage into eternity. "A christian," said the Bishop, "and still more a religious, should be prepared for a sudden death, and in that case a sudden death is not without its advantages....however the death which God sends is the best for us." This was at the very beginning of the year 1860.

On the fifth of January that same year, the servant of God was as usual at his post. Meditation, Office, Mass, Thanksgiving, Work, all, as far as appearances went, as usual. But there was severe suffering which only consummate virtue could hide. Dinner came and the Bishop was in his place. He ate little and he hid his abstinence and his sufferings under the interesting anecdotes, which he related. Dinner over, ever faithful to duty, he went out on Episcopal busi-

ness. Having transacted this business, he was returning to his residence when the Divine Master came. He was seized with apoplexy in the public street, was taken into the hall of a neighboring house, and there gave up his beautiful soul into the hands of our Blessed Lord. The Prince of Pastors came and he was *watching*, he was *ready*, he was on the look out for His coming, he was therefore, *blessed*. There was grief in every Catholic home in the city, for the Pastor whom they loved as a father was no more, but he was *blessed*. There was grief even in the most remote corner of the vast diocese, for he who visited and fed his flock with such consummate fidelity, will visit his flock no more, but he is *blessed*. The little ones in the schools which he had founded and in the orphanages which he had built, cried that they would never see their loving father more, but he is *blessed*. The strong hearts of his priests and religious and of his fellow-bishops were moved to their very depths—oh, what a loss! but he is *blessed*. “Blessed is that servant whom when the Master cometh findeth WATCHING.”

Obsequies. — The obsequies and the funeral oration were worthy of the illustrious dead. The Most Rev. Archbishop Kenrick drew with a master hand a true picture of the humble pious laborious student, the priest according to God's own heart, the religious penetrated through and through with the spirit of his father St. Alphonsus, the Bishop faithful in every duty up to the very moment of his death. "We have reason," said the Archbishop, "to believe that after a few sighs . . . the spirit of the good Prelate joyously soared aloft to commingle with the holy Pastors, who in every age ruled well the respective portions of their flock, and now triumphant wear the unfading crown with which the Prince of Shepherds has rewarded their fidelity. His soul now communes with the Ambroses, the Augustines, the Gregories, and especially with the sainted Alphonsus, whom he imitated so diligently. With them he praises God for the multitude of His mercies and gives Him homage."

But his Grace did not fail to remind his hearers that their Pastor, who had so faithfully discharged during life his obligation

to preach to them the word of God, preaches more effectively still in his death. For could he have brought home to them better than by his sudden death the oft repeated warnings of Jesus Christ, that we should always be ready? "Watch, for you know not the day, nor the hour." "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh findeth WATCHING."

The flock having shown to their Pastor every mark of affectionate veneration for six days, his body still incorrupt and flexible was laid to rest in the crypt under the sanctuary of the Redemptorist church of St. Peter. The Archbishop ordained that he whom obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff had drawn from amidst his brethren, should after death be allowed the privilege of resting in peace with them.

May we not say that it was the same Divine Providence which watched over him during life, that consigned to his brothers in religion the guardianship of a body which we have good reason to hope will one day be honored as that of a saint.

Lessons to learn. — God was not slow in making known the holiness of his servant

by special favors granted through his intercession. This led to the Introduction of the Cause of his Beatification, which was made public by a Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites dated the 15th of December 1896. And now, instead of relating the favors already granted through his intercession, here are some of the lessons of his life. Serve God and confide in Him. Love the Church and labor for her. Do all in your power for the little ones of Jesus Christ. Make all needful sacrifices that they may be brought up good Catholics, in Christian homes and Catholic schools. Love Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Love Mary and confide in her as a child in his mother. Be humble, modest, pious, industrious, kind to all, and especially to the poor. Fear the dangers of the world. Ever live in the grace of God. Be ready, *for you know not the day nor the hour.*

One word more. If while we study his bright example, we also feel that he must be very powerful with God, and hence fail not to ask his intercession, may we not indulge the sweet hope that our prayers will be heard? We can scarcely do amiss, if we

invoke the venerable servant of God in our inmost heart, first, that we may get grace to imitate his virtues, secondly, that we may obtain *miracles* through his intercession, which are God's own seal on the sanctity of his servants, and thirdly, that thus the desires of so many Bishops, Priests, Religious and Peoples in the Old and New World may be satisfied, and that we may live to see the venerable Bishop declared by the Church

BLESSED JOHN NEPOMUCENE NEUMANN.



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